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The Journal of Belles Lettres.

BABBAGE'S BRIDGEWATER TREATISE.

CHAPTER III.

ARGUMENT TO SHOW THAT THE DOCTRINES IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER DO NOT LEAD TO FATALISM.

If all the combinations and modifications of matter can be supposed to be traced up to one general and comprehensive law, from which every visible form, both in the organic and inorganic world flows, as the necessary consequence of the first impression of that law upon matter, it might seem to follow that fate or necessity governs all things, and that the world around us may not be the result of a contriving mind working for a benevolent purpose.

Such, possibly, may be the first impression of this view of the subject; but it is an erroneous view—one of those, perhaps, through which it is necessary to pass, in order to arrive at truth. Let us briefly review the labour which the human race has expended in attaining the limited knowledge we possess. For about six thousand years man has claimed the earth as his heritage, and asserted his dominion over all other beings endued with life; yet, during a large portion of that period, how comparatively small has been his mental improvement! Until the invention of printing, the mass of mankind were in many respects almost the creatures of instinct. It is true, the knowledge possessed by each generation, instead of being the gift of nature, was derived from the instruction of their predecessors; but, how little were those lessons improved by repeated communication! Transmitted most frequently by unenlightened instructors, they might lose, but could rarely gain in value.

Before the invention of printing, accidental position determined the opinions and the knowledge of the great mass of mankind. Oral information being almost the only kind accessible, each man shared the opinions of his kindred and neighbours; and truth, which is ever most quickly and surely elicited by discussion, lost all those advantages which diversity of opinion always produces for it. The minds of individual men, however powerful, could address themselves only to a very small portion of their fellow men; their influence was restricted by space and limited by time, and their highest powers were not stimulated into action by the knowledge that their reasonings could have effect where their voices were unheard, or by the conviction that the truths they arrived at, and the discoveries they made, would extend beyond their country, and survive their age.

But, since the invention of printing, how different has been the position of mankind! the nature of the instruction no longer depends entirely on the knowledge of the instructor. The village schoolmaster communicates to his pupils the power of using an instrument by which not merely the best of their living countrymen, but the greatest and wisest men of all countries and all times, may become their instructers. Even the elementary writings through which this art is taught, give to the pupil, not the sentiments of the teacher, but those which the public opinion of his countrymen esteems most fit for the beginner in knowledge. Thus the united opinions of multitudes of human minds are brought to bear even upon seemingly unimportant points.

If such is the effect of the invention of printing upon ordinary minds, its influence over those more highly endowed is far greater. To them the discussion of the conflicting opinions of different countries and distant ages, and the establishment of new truths, presents a field of boundless and exalted ambition. Advancing beyond the knowledge of their neighbours and countrymen, they may be exposed to those prejudices which result from opinions long stationary; but encouraged by the approbation of the greatest of other nations, and the more enlightened of their own—knowing that time alone is wanting to complete the triumph of truth, they may accelerate the approaching dawn of that day which shall pour a flood of light over the darkened intellects of their thankless countrymen—content themselves to exchange the hatred they experience from the honest and the dishonest intolerance of their cotemporaries for that higher homage, alike independent of space and of time, which their memory will for ever receive from the good and the gifted of all countries and all ages.

Until printing was very generally spread, civilisation scarcely advanced by slow and languid steps; since this art has become cheap, its advances have been unparalleled, and its rate of progress vastly accelerated.

It has been stated by some, that the civilisation of the western world has resulted from its being the seat of the Christian religion: however much the mild tenor of its doctrines is calculated to assist in producing such an effect, that religion cannot but be injured by an unfounded statement. It is to the easy and cheap methods of communicating thought from man to man, which enable a country to rift, as it were, its whole people, and to produce, in its science, its literature, and its arts, not the brightest efforts of a limited class, but the highest exertions of the most powerful minds among a whole community;—it is this which has given birth to the wide-spreading civilisation of the present day, and which promises a futurity yet more prolific. Whoever is acquainted with the present state of science and the mechanical arts, and looks back over the inventions and civilisation which the fourteen centuries subsequent to the introduction of Chistianity have produced, and compares them with the advances made during the succeeding four centuries following the invention of printing, will have no doubt as to the effective cause.

It is during these last three or four centuries that man, considered as a species, has commenced the development of his intellectual faculties—that he has emerged from a position in which he was almost the creature of instinct, to a state in which every step in advance facilitates the progress of his successors. In the first period, arts were discovered by individuals, and lost to the race; in the latter, the diffusion of ideas enabled the reasoning of one class to unite with the observations of another, and the most advanced point of one generation became the starting post of the next.

It is during this portion of our history that man has become acquainted with his real position in the universe—that he has measured the distance from that which is to us the great fountain of light and heat—that he has traced the orbits of earth's sister spheres, and calculated the paths of all their dependent worlds—that he has arrived at the knowledge of a law—that of gravity, which appears to govern all matter, and whose remotest consequences, if first traced by his telescope, are found written in his theory; or, if first predicted by his theory, are verified by his observations.

Simple as that law now appears, and beautifully in accordance with all the observations of past and present times, consider what it has cost of intellectual study. Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Euler, Lagrange, Laplace, all the great names which have exalted the character of man, by carrying out trains of reasoning unparalleled in every other science; these, and a host of others, each of whom might have been the Newton of another field, have all laboured to work out the consequences which resulted from that single law which he discovered. All that the human mind has produced—the brightest in genius, or the most continuous in application, has been lavished on the details of the law of gravity.

Had that law been other than it is—had it been the inverse cube of the distance, for example, it would still have required an equal expense of genius and of perseverance to have worked out its details. But, between the laws represented by the inverse square, and the inverse cube of the distance, there are interposed an infinite number of other laws, each of which might have been the basis of a system requiring the most extensive knowledge to trace out its consequences. Between every law which can be expressed by whole numbers, whether it be direct or inverse, an infinity of others can still be interposed. All these might be again combined by two, by three, or by any other combinations, and new systems might be imagined,* submitted to such laws. Thus, another infinity of laws, of a far higher order—in fact, of an *infinitely* higher order—might again be added to the list. And this might still be increased by every other combination of which such laws admit, besides that by addition, to which we have already alluded, thus forming an infinity itself of so high an order, that it is difficult to conceive. Man has, as yet, no proof of the impossibility of the existence of any of these laws. Each might, for any reason we can assign, be the basis of a creation different from our own.

It is at this point that skill and knowledge re-enter the argument, and banish for ever the dominion of chance. The Being who called into existence this creation, of which we are parts, must have chosen the present form, the present laws, in preference to the infinitely infinite variety which he might have willed into existence. He must have known and foreseen all, even the remotest consequences of every one of those laws, to have penetrated but a little way into one of which has exhausted the intellect of our whole species.

But, if such is the view we must take of the knowledge of the Creator, when contemplating the laws of inanimate matter—laws into whose consequences it has cost us such accumulated labour to penetrate—what language can we speak, when we consider that the laws which connect matter with animal life may be as infinitely varied as those which regulate material existence? The little we know might, perhaps, lead us to infer a far more unlimited field of choice. The chemist has reduced all the materials of the earth with which we are acquainted to about fifty simple bodies; but the zoologist can make no such reductions in his science. He must claim for one scarcely noticed class—that of intestinal parasites—about thirty thousand species; and, not to mention the larger classes of animals, who shall number the species of infusoria in living waters, still less those which are extinct, and whose scarcely visible relics are contained within the earth, in almost mountain masses.†

In absolute ignorance of any—even the smallest link of those chains which bind life to matter, or that still more miraculous one which connects mind to both, we can only pursue our path by the feeble light of analogy, and humbly hope that the Being, whose power and benevolence are unbounded, may enable us, in some further stage of our existence, to read another page in the history of his mighty works.

Enough, however, and more than enough, may be gathered even from our imperfect acquaintance with matter, and some few of its laws, to prove the unbounded

* Even beyond this, every law so imagined might be interrupted by any discontinuous function; and thus be made to agree, for any period, with laws of simpler form, and yet deviate, in one single, or in a certain limited number of cases, and then agree with it for ever.

† Professor Ehrenberg, of Berlin, has discovered that the tripoli employed in that city for polishing metals, which is dug up at Bilin, in Bohemia, consists almost entirely of the siliceous remains of infusoria, of a species so minute, that about 41,000 millions of them weigh 220 grains, and occupy the space of a cubic inch. The reader will find a translation of the highly interesting papers of Professor Ehrenberg in the third number of the "Scientific Memoirs," published by Mr. R. Taylor.

knowledge which must have preceded their organisation.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE DESIRE OF IMMORTALITY.

That wish, universally expressed in every variety of form, of remaining in the memory of our fellow-creatures after our passage from the present scene, has rightly been adduced as evidence of the desire of immortality, and has sometimes been explained as being founded on an instinctive belief that we are destined to it by the Creator.

The hope of remaining embalmed in the fond recollection of those we held most dear in life, and even of being remembered by our more immediate descendants, has something in it nearly connected with self; but the wish for more extended reputation—the desire that our name should pass in after times from mouth to mouth, cherished and admired by those whose applause is won by no personal recollections: or the still more fervent aspirations that we may stamp indelibly on the age we live in some mark of our individual existence, which shall form an epoch in the history of man: these hopes, these longings, receive no interpretation from the all-dominant principle of *self*; unless, indeed, we suppose the sentient principle of our nature not merely existing, but also conscious of, and gratified by, the earthly immortality it had achieved. Yet the more distant and the higher the objects we pursue, the less is it possible to suppose the mind, so occupied on earth, can, in another stage of its existence, derive pleasure from such perceptions.

To support this opinion, it is only necessary to examine the states of mind in the various classes of the aspirants after fame.

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Through every form of society, and through every rank of each, may be traced this universal passion. Examine the most highly civilised inhabitants of earth; search through it for the most cultivated and refined in taste; for the most sagacious in penetrating the passions of mankind, the most skilful in wielding them, or the most powerful in intellectual might. Taste, feeling, passion, ambition, genius, severed or combined, equally yield obedience to its sway, and present, under different appearances, the effects of its all-controlling power.

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Look at the highest productions of the poet or the novelist. By connecting his story with the scenery, the traditions, or the history of his country, he may ensure for it a local interest, a domestic and transitory popularity; but it is that deeper penetration into the secrets of the human heart, which enables him to select from amongst the same materials, those feelings that are common to the race which have, as occasion called them forth, appeared, and will continue to appear, as long as the same affections and passions shall continue to animate and agitate our frames.

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From the examination of these its highest forms, we may gather some common principles, and be enabled to perceive that the love of fame is far different from that passion for vulgar applause with which it is too frequently confounded. We may learn, that the higher the intellectual powers devoted to the task, the more remote the period for which ambition delights to raise its far distant altar.

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CHAPTER VII.

ON TIME.

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Time and change are great, only with reference to the faculties of the beings which note them. The insect of an hour, which flutters during its transient existence in an atmosphere of perfume, would attribute unchanging duration to the beautiful flowers of the cistus, whose petals cover the dewy grass but a few hours after it has received the lifeless body of the gnat. These flowers, could they reflect, might contrast their transitory lives with the prolonged existence of their greener neighbours. The leaves themselves, counting their brief span by the lapse of a few moons, might regard as almost indefinitely extended the duration of the common parent of both leaf and flower. The lives of individual trees are lost in the continued destruction and renovation which take place in forest masses. Forests themselves, starved by the exhaustion of the soil, or consumed by fire, succeed each other in slow gradation. A forest of oaks waves its luxuriant branches over a spot which has been fertilised by the ashes of a forest of pines. These periods again merge into other and still longer cycles, during which the latest of a thousand forests sinks beneath the waves, from the gradual subsidence of its parent earth; or in which extensive inundations, by accumulating the silt of centuries, gradually convert the living trunks into their stony resemblances. Stratum upon stratum subsides in comminuted particles, and is accumulated in the depths of the ocean, whence they again arise, consolidated by pressure or by fire, to form the continents and mountains of a new creation.

Such, in endless succession, is the history of the changes of the globe we dwell upon; and human observation, aided by human reason, has as yet discovered few signs of a beginning—no symptom of an end. Yet, in that more extended view which recognises our planet as one amongst the attendants of a central luminary; that sun itself, the soul, as it were, of vegetable and animal existence, but an insignificant individual among its congeners of the milky way:—when we remember that that cloud of light, gleaming with its myriad systems, is but an isolated nebula amongst a countless host of rivals, which the starry firmament surrounding us on all sides presents to us in every varied form;—some as uncondensed masses of attenuated light—some as having, in obedience to attractive forces, assumed a spherical figure; others, as if farther advanced in the history of their fate, having a denser central nucleus surrounded by a more diluted light, spreading into such vast spaces, that the whole of our own nebula would be lost in it;—others there are, in which the apparently unformed and irregular mass of nebulous light is just curdling, as it were, into separate systems; whilst many present a congeries of distinct points of light, each, perhaps, the separate luminary of a creation more glorious than our own;—when the birth, the progress, and the history of sidereal systems are considered, we require some other unit of time than even that comprehensive one which astronomy has unfolded to our view. Minute and almost infinitesimal as is the time which comprises the history of our race, compared with that which records the history of our system, the space even of this latter period forms too limited a standard wherewith to measure the footmarks of eternity.

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(To be continued.)

EDITOR'S TABLE.

The Pitcher Plant.—We gave place last week to the report of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, an institution rapidly advancing in the good opinion of people fond of good marketing, or admirers of the beauties of nature. Its funds too are in such a prosperous state, that the day is not far distant when a great attraction will be added to the vicinity of Philadelphia in the shape of a botanic garden.

The plant which most attracted our attention at the last exhibition was the Nepenthes distillatoria, or Pitcher plant, raised from the seed by Mr. Buist, and the only one, we believe, ever exhibited in America. The plant was then young, and the pitchers small, but they continue to grow, and are now a fourth as large as a tumbler; they will probably continue to increase until each would contain a pint of water; the eye is much pleased by the novelty of seeing such a contrivance suspended at the end of each leaf; we can liken it to nothing so well as to our grandfathers' silver tankards with their massy lids. The following popular account will interest those who have paid any attention to plants:—

The Nepenthes distillatoria, or Pitcher plant, abounds in those stony and arid parts of Java, from which small birds and quadrupeds must migrate in search of water, were it not for this vegetable production. The traveller who passes through those sultry regions is frequently attracted by its singular appearance, and by the number of birds that fly in and out among the branches. On drawing near, he observes a small bag, shaped like a pitcher, at the foot stalk of each leaf, furnished with a neatly fitted lid, and having a kind of hinge that passes over the handle of the pitcher, and connects it with the leaf. This hinge is a strong fibre, which contracts in showery weather, and when the dew falls. Numerous little goblets, filled with sweet fresh water, are thus set forth, and afford a delightful draught to such animals as climb the branches, and to a variety of winged creatures. They hear the pattering of the heavy drops on the dry leaves, while sheltered in their leafy places; and when the rain is sufficiently abated, they come, and refresh themselves at every open cup. It is delightful to see them thus employed, and the pitcher plant is sometimes almost covered with these thirsty creatures; some drinking eagerly, others lifting up their little bills between each sip, as if grateful for the refreshing draught. But no sooner has the cloud passed by, and the warm sun shone forth, than the heated leaf begins to expand, and closes the goblet so firmly, as even to prevent evaporation. This is a beautiful and perspective contrivance. The quadruped, bird, or insect has had sufficient time to quench its thirst, for the heavens do not immediately become clear; and when the goblet is filled with dew, some time must necessarily elapse before the warmth of the sun is felt. But the plant also requires refreshment; rain-drops soon trickle from the arid place in which it grows, and the nightly dews are insufficient to refresh the sloping side of its assigned locality. The pitchers, therefore, are essential to its preservation, and a sufficient quantity of fluid is preserved by the gradual contraction of the lid. As long, too, as the lid stands open, the slender bill, or proboscis, or the tongue, can be readily thrust in, but as it gradually contracts, this is of course precluded; but then, lest any poor thirsty creature should arrive late, or remain unsatisfied in the crowd, such pitchers as are covered with leaves remain much longer open, and it is probable that some never close at all. We may also remark, that neither one, nor two, nor even ten large pitchers are assigned to each plant, but that every leaf-stalk has its own. Hence every leaf receives a necessary supply of moisture through tubes that communicate like syphons, with its absorbing vessels. I scarcely know a single instance in which a wonderful adaptation of one part to another, of one vegetable to the animals that surround it, is more clearly evinced than in this amazing plant.

Now, if the leaves were broad like those of the common chestnut, or the coltsfoot, neither rain nor dew could reach the pitchers: but instead of this, they stand upwards; therefore, when the lid is open, the pitcher readily fills, and to its brimming goblet innumerable winged creatures eagerly resort. The insect has a long proboscis, with which to sip up the moisture; the bird introduces its narrow bill; but if the insect or bird has instead of these, mouths constructed like a fish, or those peculiar tongues which distinguish equestrian animals considerable difficulty would arise, and the plant be often broken in the endeavour to procure a sip. We may also fairly assume that the little quadrupeds which resort thither are furnished with a long and slender lower lip, which permits them to lap the water, through a comparatively a narrow aperture. And as the claws of birds enable them to retain a firm hold on branches, that are even rudely shaken by the wind, and the feet of insects are so formed as to grasp the smoothest stems, many little animals have likewise feet well adapted for climbing. The field-mouse, for instance, which can run up a stack of corn, and all swift moving and defenceless quadrupeds, are thus constructed. The digging foot which is assigned to the mole, or one resembling a horse's hoof, would be useless in ascending slippery places. The pitcher at each leaf has also a twofold purpose; it refreshes the parent plant, and holds forth an open goblet to many a poor, thirsty, wayfaring creature. A few would suffice either to the plant or its visiters, as I before observed, and, therefore, every leaf is similarly provided; nor is it less worthy of remark, that if the fluid were contracted only in heavy rain, such birds, and quadrupeds, and insects, as fly or walk by night, would not be able to quench their thirst; but dew equally affords it, therefore it is for them also that the nightly goblet is thus bountifully replenished. And how multifarious are its uses, whether filled by rain or dew! Without the moisture which it thus retains, the beautiful green colour that adorns the plant would fade, the flowers could not open, the seeds could not ripen; such creatures as subsist on the sweet nectarious juices of its open flowers would lose their daily banquet, and numerous animals, and quadrupeds must drag on a miserable existence, indeed, they could exist at all.

Smelting Iron.—In reply to a correspon-

New York (B. B. H.) who enquires more particularly respecting Mr. Crane's discovery of the application of anthracite coal to the smelting of iron, we state, that the notice which appeared in this Journal was taken from the proceedings of the British Association, reported in either the London Athenæum or Literary Gazette; that extract contained all that has yet come to our knowledge. In reply to the question, "Where can the publications of the Society be consulted?" we answer, that the reports of each year are published in a large octavo volume about six months after the meeting, and are then to be found on the shelves of the Library Company of Philadelphia, and probably elsewhere in America. The whole of Mr. Crane's paper on his important discovery will no doubt be published in the next volume, till the appearance of which we fear it will not be in our power to add any information on the subject. Much attention seems to be bestowed on the manufacture of iron, and the comparative composition of cast iron prepared with the hot and cold blast, has formed the topic of a communication to the Association by Dr. Thomson. When the Clyde iron works were established above forty years ago, ten tons of coal were requisite to produce one ton of iron. This coal was previously coked, by which rather more than half its weight was driven off under the form of gas, &c. By various improvements the quantity of coal requisite was diminished from ten tons to seven tons thirteen cwt. And the quantity of limestone requisite for smelting one ton of iron was ten and a half cwt. When hot air (or air heated to above 607°,) was blown into the furnace instead of cold air, it was found that coal could be used without being coked, and the quantity requisite to smelt a ton of iron was reduced to two tons nineteen cwt.; the lime was reduced to seven cwt., and the produce of iron in a given time from a furnace was more than doubled. The reason of this superiority of hot air over cold seems to be, that when the hot air enters the furnace, it is immediately united to the coal, and is all consumed; whereas, the cold air partly passes up through the materials, and produces, as it ascends, a scattered and useless combustion. Hence, when hot air is introduced, the heat at the point of combustion is greater than when cold air is used. Hence the smaller quantity of limestone requisite, and the greater produce in iron in a given time. The specific gravity of cold blast iron is lower than that of hot blast: the average of the former being 6.7034, and that of the latter 7.0623. On this subject our correspondent will find in the London Athenæum of Oct. 7 some interesting particulars.

Literary Novelties.—The crowded state of our columns last week excluded a summary of the works just announced in London, among which are some of considerable importance. Mr. Bently alone has in press the following:—

Memoirs of Sir Wm. Knighton, by Lady Knighton—of Admiral Lord de Saumarez, by Sir John Ross—of Charles Mathews, by Mrs. Mathews—of Sir Sydney Smith, by a Naval Officer—of the Colman Family—of Madame Le Brun, by herself—and of Joseph Grimaldi, by himself;—the Life and Times of Louis XIV., by Mr. James—Chelsea College and its Traditions, by the Rev. G. R. Gleig—Memoirs of the Courts of Elizabeth and James I., by Bishop Goodman, now first published—Memoirs of the Court of Queen Anne—A Voyage to Tangier, and Correspondence of Pepys, now first published—A Short History of Sculpture, by R. Westmacott—Excursions in the Abruzzi, &c., by the Hon. Keppel Craven—Vienna and the Austrians, by Mrs. Trollope—A Winter's Journey from Constantinople to Tehran, by J. B. Frazer—the History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, by W. H. Prescott—Travels in Austria, Russia, and Turkey, by C. B. Elliot—two novels, Scrope Daynell, and Claude Du Val, by Ainsworth—Barbary Rudge, a Story of the Riots of London, 1780, by Charles Dickens (Boz)—Nell Gwynne, by Douglas Jerrold—to say nothing of minor matters, or of works heretofore announced.

A French translation of Mrs. Somerville's admirable work

"On the Connection of the Physical Sciences," has just appeared in Paris, by a Madame Mulien, a Parisian lady devoted to the same pursuits as the accomplished authoress. That the task of translating what Madame Mulien justly calls, in her preface, "La belle et noble production d'une femme que ses talens placent d'une manière si remarquable au-dessus de son sexe, et dont la juste célébrité honore l'Angleterre," has been ably executed, the name of M. Arago, under whose auspices the work appears, and by whom the whole was revised, is a sufficient guarantee: while this latter circumstance shows the high estimation in which the original is held by the French philosopher.

A new weekly publication is about to make its appearance in London, entitled, "La Mosaique Française; Recueil Hebdomadaire de Littérature, Sciences, Beaux Arts, &c." If the expectations held out in the prospectus be fulfilled, it will no doubt experience great success.

We glean from continental sources the following literary intelligence:—

There will speedily be published in Paris, the commencing numbers of "La Armeria real de Madrid, ou le Musée d'Artillerie Espagnol," containing eighty plates, engraved on copper and steel, or lithographed, representing the arms of Pelagius, the Cid, Pizarro, Fernand Cortes, and other famous Spaniards, after drawings by M. Gaspar Sensi, and the text by M. Achille Jubinal. The work will form 20 livraisons, each containing four or five plates, and one sheet of text in folio. A work similar in plan and extent, is about to be commenced, with the title of "Le Musée d'Artillerie de Paris."

Shortly will appear in two volumes octavo, with maps and plans, "Histoire de Charles XIV. (Bernadotte) Roi de Suède et Norvège," by Touchard Lafosse.

A "Picturesque Tour of North and South America," containing a digested narrative of the discoveries and observations of all the principal travelers in that portion of the world, from the time of Columbus to the present day, has been commenced in numbers, under the superintendence of M. Alcide d'Orbigny. It will be published in the same style as the "Picturesque Tour of the World," and contain about 300 engravings.

We observe that Victor Hugo's celebrated novel, "Notre Dame de Paris," has reached the 11th edition.

The recent travels in the East of Count Alexandre de Laborde, and Messrs. Becker and Hall, are to be recorded in a splendid work, by the title of "Voyage en Orient," to be edited and published by Leon de Laborde, author of the "Voyage en Arabie." It will be embellished with 180 plates, and consist of thirty-six parts, forming two folio volumes.

The royal library in Paris possesses a great number of extremely valuable oriental manuscripts, which have never been translated and published either in France or in Europe. The National Institute comprehends oriental scholars, than whom none are better qualified to render those treasures available; and the royal printing office possesses the most complete collection of foreign types that exists in the world. These united means only awaited the royal patronage to produce a typographical and literary monument surpassing every other of the kind. A prince who, before he ascended the throne, was president of the Asiatic Society, could not fail to take such an enterprise under his protection. A royal ordinance, issued in 1834, commanded the publication of a collection, comprehending the text and translations of the most important oriental manuscripts in the royal and other libraries. A commission of literary men, appointed by the keeper of the seal, and consisting of Messrs. Silvestre de Sacy, Quatremere, Eugene Burnouf, and Fauriel, has been engaged, under the presidency of M. Lebrun, director of the royal printing-office, in selecting such manuscripts as should be included in that collection. Among the works already fixed upon are—1. The History of the Persian Mongols, by Raschid Eddin, edited, translated, and accompanied with notes, and a memoir of the life and works of the author, by M. Quatremere. 2. The Proverbs of Meidani, Arabic text, translated and illustrated with notes, by the same scholar. 3. The Shah Nameh, or Book of Kings, by Firdusi, translated by M. Mohl, a German. The first-mentioned of these works has just appeared in a folio volume. Some others have already been fixed upon; for example, the Bagharata-Pourana, and the Code of Laws of King Waghtang V.

The Verlag der Klassiker at Stuttgart has commenced the publication of the Thousand and One Nights, now first translated into German from the Arabic original text, by Dr. Gustav Weil, edited by August Lewald, and illustrated by 2000 engravings. The work is to appear in weekly numbers, at the low rate of one groschen (1½d.) each, and to be completed in two years.

The same establishment has undertaken the publication of "Shakspeare's Dramatic Works," in German and English, in three volumes, illustrated with 1000 scenes and vignettes, engraved on wood by the most eminent artists in Europe.

The house of Baumgärtner, of Leipzig, has also commenced an illustrated edition of the great dramatist, "printed from the text of the most renowned editors, under the superintendence of Dr. J. G. Flügel," with 270 engravings on wood; the larger by Albert and Otto Vogel, and the smaller by Thompson. It is to be completed in about fifteen parts of eight sheets each: one to be published every four, or at most every six weeks.

Sir Francis Bacon was wont to commend much the advice of a plain man at Buxton, who sold brooms. A proud lazy young fellow came to him for a besom upon trust, to whom the old man said, "Friend, hast thou no money? Borrow of thy back and thy belly, they 'll never ask thee for 't; I should be dunning thee every day."

A Long Nose.—Napoleon used to say, "Strange as it may appear, when I want any good head-work done, I choose a man, provided his education has been suitable, with a long nose. His breathing is bold and free, and his brains, as well as his lungs and heart, cool and clear. In my observation of men, I have almost invariably found a long nose and a long head go together."

To take a Speck from the Eye.—We lately learned a very clever and safe mode of extracting any little speck of dirt or dust from the eye, when it cannot be easily removed by the hand. It consists in licking it out with the tongue. The person affected lays his head down with his face uppermost, and the operator, desiring that the eye shall be kept open, comes across it gently with his tongue, so as effectually to wipe it clear of the extraneous body. This, we find, has been a common practice among some classes of stone-cutters, on getting what is called a *fire* in their eye; and we doubt if the whole of the resources of the medical art could afford a better remedy.

Desire to Indulge in Music.—Nothing is more common than spontaneous stimulation of the organ of tune. We are then often haunted with what Mathews calls the ghost of a tune, which intrudes itself on all occasions, and sometimes under circumstances peculiarly ludicrous. I have heard of a worthy clergyman, who, while in the pulpit one Sunday, felt an excessive desire to sing Maggie Lauder; on going home, the tendency to indulge in this profane freak became irresistible, and without more ado he went into his garden and sung the song with great glee. This done, the inclination vanished; his organ of tune received the gratification for which it was craving, and the ghost of Maggie Lauder took to flight.—*Macnish's Phrenology.*

Clear and Decisive.—Peter the Great, when in England, is said to have remarked to a confidant, that he was not aware of having more than four lawyers in his dominions, and when he got home he would hang two of them.

Matrimonial Statistics.—At the age of 60, there are but 22 unmarried men alive for 48 married: at 70, 11 bachelors for 27 married men; and at 80, for three bachelors, who may chance to be alive, there are nine Benedicks. Very nearly the same proportion holds good in the female sex, of whom while 72 who have been married attain the age of 45, only 52 unmarried reach the same term of life.

Definition of Nothing.—At the Donegal assizes, the following humorous cross-examination of a witness occasioned much merriment in court. Mr. Doherty.—"What business do you follow?" "I am a schoolmaster." "Did you turn off your scholars or did they turn you off?" "I do not wish to answer irrelevant questions"—(Laughter). "Are you a great favourite with your pupils?" "Ay! troth am I; a much greater favourite than you are with the public." "Where were you, sir, this night?" "This night!" said the witness; "there is a learned man—*this* night is not come yet; I suppose you mean *that* night." (Here the witness looked at the

judge, and winked his eye, as if in triumph.) "I presume the 'schoolmaster was abroad' that night, doing nothing?" "Define 'nothing,'" said witness. Mr. Doherty did not comply. "Well," said the *learned* schoolmaster, "I will define it—it is a footless stocking, without a leg"—(roars of laughter, in which his lordship joined). "You may go down, sir." "Faith, I well believe you 're tired enough of me; but it is my profession to enlighten the public, and if you have any more questions to ask, I will answer them."—*Belfast Northern Whig.*

ADMONITORY INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE TO LANSDOWNE (OR ANY OTHER) PASSAGE.

Passenger! think'st thou this passage to pass through!
Pass then, and think; but in passing don't linger.
If you pass *without* thinking, you pass like an ass through;
So, think while you 're passing, and pass for a thinker!

G. D.

TURN ABOUT.—*——n, the comedian, and an inveterate wag, strolling through the streets of A——, observed on a sign over the door of a shop, "Turning done here." He stepped in, and enquired for the master of the premises. "I am here, sir," answered the first person he saw. "You're a turner?—you know your business I have no doubt." "Certainly, sir, I turn in ivory, brass, wood, iron—in short in *every thing*." "Good! oblige me by turning something for me while I wait." "What is it, sir?" "Turn me a somerset." "Leave the shop, or I 'll turn you out and——" "I 'll overturn you if you try it!" returned the horrid creature.

Another interruption has been experienced in the works of the tunnel under the Thames. It is fully ascertained, however, that the aperture in the bed of the river through which the water has again found its way into the tunnel, is small compared to that which formerly occurred. Mr. Brunel is preparing a report of the whole circumstances attending this accident, for the information of her majesty's government, as well as for the directors. He still expresses his confident opinion that he shall be able to complete the great work. It is, however, generally believed that a shaft must be commenced on the Middlesex shore before the works can proceed with any rapidity, as the waters arising from land springs have of late much increased, added to the difficulty of obtaining a proper ventilation.

ANDREW M'CANN, THE ABSENT MAN.

In the town of Ayr lived Andrew M'Cann,
A very worthy, but absent man:—
Andrew once called at a house in town,
And sent up his name—"Mister Peter Brown;"
Held an egg in his hand while his watch was boiling,
And oft was seen toiling
His weary way to the bridge of Ayr,
With one foot booted and one foot bare.

A very old man was Andrew M'Cann;
And always before he went to rest,
As soon as undress'd,
He roll'd his small clothes up like a ball,
Then taking his coat, with the greatest care,
He hung it over the back of a chair;
Then laid his head
On the pillow in bed.
One night he came home more absent than ever,
And, as you may suppose, "uncommonly clever;"
So taking his garments (what a conceit!)
He tuck'd them up under blanket and sheet,
Then threw himself over the chair, like a sack,
And broke his back.

C. C.

THE EXPLORING EXPEDITION.

We understand that all the members of the scientific corps attached to the Southern Exploring Expedition have been assembled in New York by order of the Secretary of the Navy, and reported for duty to the commander. The various branches of science have been assigned in the following manner: Alfred Agate of New York, Botanical draftsman; Reynell Coates, of Philadelphia, Comparative Anatomy and Helminthology; Joseph P. Couthouy, of Boston, Actinology, Conchology and Malacology; James D. Dana, of New Haven, Geology and Mineralogy; E. H. Darley, of Philadelphia, Zoological Draftsman, particularly in reference to the various races of man; J. Drayton, of Philadelphia, Zoological Draftsman (for the inferior animals); James Eights, of Albany, N. Y., Palæontology, or organic remains; Asa Gray, of New York, and William Rich, of Washington, D. C., Botany; Horatio E. Hale, of Boston, Philology; Raphael Hoyle, of New York, Landscape Painting; Walter R. Johnson, of Philadelphia, Meteorology and its collateral branches; Titian R. Peale, of Philadelphia, Ornithology; Charles Pickering, of Philadelphia, Ichthyology and Erpetology; John W. Randall, of Boston, Crustaceology and Entomology. The departments of Mammalogy and Ethnography it is believed have not yet been assigned. Those of Astronomy, Hydrography, and Topography will probably be committed to the charge of some of the naval officers accompanying the expedition.

Besides the above, the following have been appointed as assistants: Wm. B. McMurtrie, of Philadelphia, Assistant Zoological Draftsman; Mr. McGuigan, of Philadelphia, as Taxidermist; Mr. Snyder, as Instrument Maker.

We are much gratified to learn that the scientific corps has been organised as a *strictly temperance body*. The members have thus voluntarily assumed a noble position, which will doubtless tend to contribute much to the success of this great national enterprise. It imparts a *moral* as well as an intellectual dignity to that body, and presages the most happy results.

The expedition will probably sail by the first week in December, and the best wishes of the American people will attend them.—*Boston Journal.*

List of New Books published in London to the latest dates.

Goethe's Correspondence with a Child, 2 vols. 8vo. History of England, continued from Sir James Mackintosh's, Vol. VII. (forming Vol. XCV. of Dr. Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia), 8vo. Ernest Maltravers, by the author of "Pelham," &c., 3 vols. F. W. Krummacher's Glance into the Kingdom of Greece, 12mo. Pastoral Recollections, by a Presbyter, 18mo. Jairus, or the Home Missionary, by the Rev. J. Young, 12mo. A Winter at De Courcy Lodge, by Mrs. Bourne, 12mo. The Philosophy of Health, by Southwood Smith, M. D., Vol. II. 12mo. The Works of Jacob Abbott, complete in 1 vol. 8vo. Letters to Brother John, on Life, Health, and Disease, by Edward Johnson, 8vo. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott, Vol. V. 8vo. The Earldom Restored, by E. Lakeley, Gent., 2 vols. 12mo. An Exact Reprint of the Roman Index Expurgatorius, edited, with a preface, by R. Gibbings, 12mo. The Chemical Decompositions of the London Pharmacopœia, by J. Steggall, M. D., 12mo. Affection's Keepsake, 1838, 32mo. Ethel Churchill, or the Two Brides, by Miss Landon, 3 vols. 8vo. Roscoe's South Wales, royal 8vo. 48 plates. Stories of Spanish Life, from the German of Huber, edited by Lieut. Col. Craufurd, 2 vols. The Life of Sir Edward Coke, by C. W. Johnson, 2 vols. 8vo. Proceedings of the Zoological Society, Part IV., 1836.

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